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A monthly message to the home missionary family of the Board of American Missions. United Lutheran Church in America, 231 Madison Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

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Staff Expose

The staff of the Board of American Missions opened itself as widely as possible to the synods' home mission administrators when it met in their presence at Dayton, Ohio, on March 24th. This was a feature of a conference authorized by the Board and held immediately following the meetings of the synodical presidents and of the Lutheran Laymen's Movement in the same place on March 22nd and 23rd.

In the past the Board frequently invited new synodical presidents or home mission superintendents to its meetings or those of the staff. Due to the recent increase in full-time presidents and synodical mission superintendents it seemed advisable to have a church-wide meeting of this kind.

The conference opened on the evening of the 23rd with a supper attended by 48 people. President Fry of the ULCA graciously stayed to bring greetings to the group. An address was made on home mission interests common to synods and the Board. Presdeint Madsen of the Michigan synod presented a letter that he had been sending to every new mission developer on his territory. It was received with appreciation and many other synodical administrators decided to send a similar greeting and information sheet to their new missionaries.

The following morning the staff held an open meeting in the presence of the whole group. It considered information and 52 recommendations that were at that time ready for information and presentation at the next meeting of the Board and invited discussion of each item by all present. It was so "natural" that later the staff decided that it would need no meeting at the usual time of two weeks prior to the Board meeting.

One particularly difficult proposal formed the first part of the afternoon program. A synodical president and mission developer presented a carefully worked out survey of a large mission field with a plea for special consideration by the Board. The matter was discussed thoroughly by staff members and synodical representatives. A satisfactory solution is in process of being worked out. The other item on the afternoon program was a panel discussion of "synodical missions." Board President Dr. Foelsch acted as moderator. The other participants were Superintendent Buhl, Secretary Knudsen, Director Bowman and Presidents Conrad and Bishop.

It was reported that at the presidents' conference on the preceding day a restudy of the Church's Plan of Operation, which has been the charter of the Board since its organization in 1926, was requested with a view to revision. This is to be done by a joint committee of presidents and board representatives.

Besides the staff, President Charles B. Foelsch represented the Board. He presided at all sessions except the staff meeting.

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Missions Call Own Pastors

The following mission congregations have attained the strength whereby they are able to call their own pastors. All named have accepted. All but Prince of Peace, Dearborn, called their own mission developers.

El Paso, Texas, St. Timothy, Dale W. Hultgren, April 1, 1955;

Macon, Ga., St. Luke's, William R. Hartman, April 1;

El Cajon, Calif., St. John's, James P. Bishop, April 1;

Elmsford, N. Y., St. Mark's, R. W. Storm, April 1;

Jacksonville, Fla., St. Matthew's, J. D. Sheppard, April 1;

Dearborn, Mich., Prince of Peace, William A. Diehl, April 15.

This makes a total of 26 congregations in 1955 calling their own pastors for the first time.

Insurance Endorsements

The Board has been asking that Board Missionaries have endorsements put upon their car insurance policies for property damage and bodily injury liability protecting the Board of American Missions. This is still desired.

It is not necessary for missionaries under call by congregations to secure such endorsements. The Board's liability would be involved only in cases of the missionaries who are directly under the Board's call.

The choir of Gloria Dei church, Kelso, Washington, traveled 65 miles to Morton on the day after Christmas to sing to the mission congregation being gathered there.

Bronx Angels

Children in St. John's, Bronx, N. Y., Christmas pageant where Board is helping by providing a woman parish worker (position recently vacant by resignation of Sister Louise Schulz).

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School Capacities Filled July 19-22

The three schools for home missionaries will be on the campuses of Gustavus Adolphus college, St. Peter, Minnesota; Lenoir Rhyne college, Hickory, North Carolina; and at the Lucerne hotel, Clear Lake, California.

The only requests for scholarships which can still be considered are those from missionaries who will enter the service of the Board in June or July.

The attendance promises to reach considerably over five hundred. Within this group are 242 home missionaries, 128 wives and 120 children of missionaries.

Special activities will be provided for the children and women.

Under competent teachers, three courses of studies will be provided in addition to four panel discussions and three workshops.

Athletic and social activities will be arranged.

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The Michigan synod has been circularized with a fine home mission promotional sheet "Pinpointing Opportunities to Spend Self and Extend the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus." The sender is D. K. Jones of Kalamazoo who takes full responsibily.

National Council Home Missions

The Board of American Missions has been a member of the Division of Home Missions and its predecessor, the Home Missions Council, ever since its organization. It now budgets $3000 for the Division's work. Extracts from the Board's report to the Executive Board as to activities and relationships with the Division indicate Lutheranism's part in some of its activities:

At the end of 1954 the committee on Defense Communities terminated its work.

A special committee was appointed for closer cooperation with the Joint Commission on Missionary Education in view of the vital part home missions has in the mission study program for which the JCME provides the text books. The book for the 1954-55 season is "Man and God in the City" by Kenneth D. Miller. In it are several references to work done by the ULCA through its BAM. For 1955-56 the home mission study is "The American Indian." Information concerning our work at Rocky Boy was furnished the author of the new text book.

Lutherans have become prominent in the work of the American committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews. This is a joint agency of the Division of home missions and the International missionary council. Doctors Gerberding and Hoyer are representatives on it from the Division. Dr. Gotwald represents the Division of foreign missions of the NCC and its new executive secretary is another Lutheran, the Rev. Harold Floreen. Under the auspices of this committee a conference on the Christian approach to the Jews was held at Lake Geneva prior to the Evanston meeting of the World Council of churches. Credit for its success and influence has been given largely to the Rev. Nels E. Bergstrom, secretary of the committee on the Christian approach to the Jewish people of the division of American missions of the National Lutheran council.

It is interesting that under the American Indian committee of the Division its work at Phoenix, Ariz., has been turned over to a local church committee in which our Pastor Frank H. Clutz is taking a prominent part. This committee promotes a triennial conference of the National fellowship of Indian workers which in 1955 will be held in Estes park. This is of interest in view of expressed sentiments among Lutherans for the inclusion of Indian work now being done by three general Lutheran bodies into one category under the National Lutheran council.

The Alaska committee of the Division has a man who coordinates work being done at the Mt. Edgecumbe orthopedic hospital in Sitka, Alaska. We are told that the only Protestant holding regular services there is our Pastor Frederick Knebel. This committee also held a conference of Alaska home mission workers in which the BAM did not participate because its work in Alaska is normal congregational development.

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As a result of a National Lutheran Council self-study of the San Francisco Bay area the participating churches adopted as a minimum goal for their ministry the addition of 15 new congregations within one year, 18 in two years and 20 more within five years. At least two new fields are already proposed to the Board of American Missions at its May meeting for immediate occupancy.

To Serve All

The work of the Lord is not a burden, but a challenge and a joy. A mission sets out on the right foot, when right from the beginning it realizes that not just a small group of people are getting together to form an organization for themselves. The congregation is to bring Christ to the community and to the world. It is the Lord's work "I will build My Church," says the Lord. "Go ye therefore and preach the gospel to every creature." The mission is to reach out and serve all whom God would reach through its ministry.—The Church Messenger, Western Canada Synod.

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Bread Upon the Waters

The Iowa synod prints its own form of announcement of the organization of a church. On its front cover it has a large picture of Secretary K. S. Henry of the Board's division of Survey and Research standing beside the model of a chapel. The model was used in the display during the Board's presentation at the Seattle convention.

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The Rev. F. W. Haak reports that in St. John's Church, Aylmer, Ont., which he has served since 1951, the baptized membership has increased from 148 to 427.

Answer to "What Church Is This?"

Faith Church, Jeffersonville, Indiana, and dwelling from which it was remodelled. Mission Pastor Edgar O. Doering identified it and sent the picture of the house. Total cost, including remodeling and furnishings, even organ, $30,000.

West Indies News

The Caribbean synod, largely a product of the Board's home mission administration, at its meeting in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, May 30, 31, will find that it has gained 104 in confirmed membership, bringing its total to 2,575. Its giving for local expenses increased about $9,000 to $72,941, of which its benevolence offering increase was $800. It numbers 17 women's societies and 19 Luther leagues. Five of its congregations met the ULCA's minimum standard of benevolence giving, led by Holy Trinity, Frederiksted, Virgin Islands. The other four were in Rio Piedras, Puerto Nuevo and San Juan in Puerto Rico, and in Cruz Bay, St. John, Virgin Islands.

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Pastor Leopold Caban, ULCA Editor of Spanish Publications, and Miss Myrtle Wilke, ULCA missionary to Argentina, visited Puerto Rico in February in the interest of Spanish Lutheran publications.

Thirtieth Anniversary

Miss Frieda M. Hoh first arrived in Puerto Rico March 2, 1925. Her fellow missionaries observed the thirtieth anniversary of her arrival by surprising her with a testimonial luncheon at the Caribe Hilton Hotel, San Juan, March 2, 1955. There were 34 persons present in the private dining room that was suitably prepared for the occasion. Pastor Eduardo Roig was toastmaster and spoke for the Caribbean Synod. Pastor Evaristo Falcó spoke for the missionaries, Pastor William G. Arbaugh for the Board of American Missions, and Miss Pauline Ziegler for the Women's Missionary Society of the Ohio Synod, which sponsors Miss Hoh's work in Puerto Rico.

That evening the recently enlarged Holy Trinity Church of Bayamón, where Miss Hoh first served in Puerto Rico, was crowded to capacity for an anniversary service. Numerous speakers paid tribute to her long and fruitful missionary labor. They represented the Synod, the Board, the Women's Missionary Society of Synod and of the ULCA, the Catherine von Bora Society, and the various congregations where Miss Hoh has served. Beautiful and useful gifts were presented. Deeply moved, Missionary Hoh responded appropriately to the greetings and gifts, giving thnks to God for her having been enabled to give thirty happy years of missionary service in the Puerto Rico field.

Miss Pauline Ziegler, former missionary in Liberia, arrived safely in Frederiksted, Virgin Islands, to superintendent the Queen Louise Home.

She was warmly welcomed by Mrs. Helena M. Minneman, Acting Matron, by the staff and children of the Home, and by the entire corps of Lutheran missionaries on St. Croix. Sister Florence Bechtold, R.N., former Matron, is on furlough at the Philadelphia Motherhouse of Deaconesses, prior to undertaking a new deaconess assignment.

Mission Developer Luther N. Schaeffer writes:

"We have been here now about a month. It is hard at this time to fully evaluate what can be done. One thing is sure . . . there will be a United Lutheran church in Sarasota, Florida. After newspaper publicity of our arrival appeared, folks called us by telephone and others came to the house to express interest. We have made a little over 100 calls to date. There seem to be enough people interested, so that now we are beginning to plan for our first service. This requires three steps: 1) Having an initial meeting with interested people to make plans, 2) securing some hall suitable for holding services, and 3) actually holding the first service. Now is the time we really need your prayers, for until the fiirst service we live in anticipation, not knowing for certain what to expect. While the work is exacting it is also rewarding."

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Something to Aim At

This is what the Rev. Roy N. Grosz of Grace Church, Oakville, Ontario, wrote in a closing paragraph of a recent report:

"Inspirational pastoral leadership. A home missionary must have the patience of Job, the intestinal fortitude of Nehemiah, the outspoken earnestness of Peter, the courage of Stephen. He must be constrained by the love of Christ. Humor must sweeten bitterness, forgiveness must cover failure; self-pity must be utterly rooted out. He must be a caretaker, stenographer, a glorified reporter, an authority on finance and architecture, maintain an exemplary home life. Perhaps it is too much for one man. Certainly for this one. He has hardly time to be a Pastor which he regrets very much."

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New Fields Entered

Toronto and Hamilton, Ont., work among new arrivals from Estonia and Sweden, on March 1, by the Rev. August Raidur;

Omaha, Nebr., southwest section, April 11th, by the Rev. Martin C. Ashley;

Arlington Heights, Ill., Our Saviour, already reported organized, had previously been entered by Synodical Missionary Geo. H. Hoog.

These, together with those previously reported, total 18 thus far in 1955.

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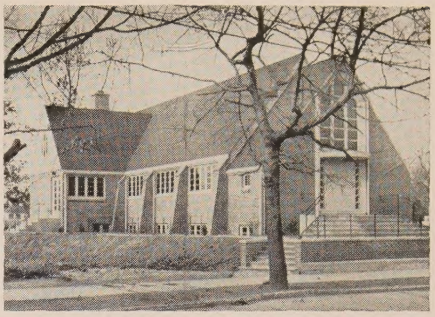
Missionary Wallace G. Minke of the Owen Sound-Wiarton parish in Canada reports that the new Canadians are becoming more approachable as prospects for membership in his churches. Ninety new members were added in 1953-54. The missionary gives monthly broadcasts over station CFOS.

Nova Scotia Church



Our Saviour's Church, Dartmouth, N. S., recently completed, the Rev. R. E. Bieber, developer and pastor.

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Dedications

Phoenix, Arizona, Faith (loan mission), enlarged church, March 13, the Rev. F. H. Clutz;

San Diego, California, Christ church, youth center, March 13, the Rev. Quentin P. Garman;

San Diego, California, Christ church (5th unit of comprehensive plan) March 20, the Rev. Quentin P. Garman;

Mansfield, Ohio, Holy Trinity, Xander Hall (education unit), March 20, the Rev. Wray C. Smith.

Marietta, Georgia, Holy Trinity, First unit church, March 27, the Rev. Paul Counts.

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Missionary Charles R. Patterson of Messiah church, Hickory, N. C., reports that more than 2,000 people inspected the new church on the day of its formal opening. They are forced to think about completing the second story of their educational building and preparing the gallery for use at the worship services.

As the outdoor Christmas display members built a stable to house live animals including a donkey and several sheep as a background for the manger scene.

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The $24,000 income of the Berkeley Hills mission, Pittsburgh, Pa., was $4,000 above the budget in 1954. This enabled the congregation to install new pews and carpet and refinish its church in general and also to make a $3,000 prepayment on its indebtedness. The Rev. Harry S. Bowman is the pastor.

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As evidence that the Puerto Rico churches are accepting responsibilities for the maintenance and improvement of their properties six of them contributed a total of $15,500 for improvements and maintenance during 1954.

Field Notes

Board Missionary Charles F. Steck, Jr., who is developing a new congregation in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., writes:

"We are certainly not setting the world on fire at the moment, but we are growing. And that really is saying something when it is realized that we are worshipping under most inadequate conditions. But the people come! A week or so ago we had ninety-two people in a room when seventy-five crowds it. We had them sitting in the hallways, on desks in adjoining offices and used all the available chairs wherever they were. It was thrilling!"

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At Nativity, Wonder Lake, Ill., evangelism has been the emphasis and the results were 26 new members received on March 27. With the influx has also come a renewed spirit in the congregation which i to be seen in every category of the report.

The church is becoming a center for high school youth activities. "This is truly thrilling and I can't help but get 'carried away' once in a while," writes Missionary Burton Schroeder.

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The Rev. Frans Koski of New Finnland, Sask., held services for the Finnish people in Winnipeg. Eighty were present. The group is contemplating organization as a congregation.

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Advent, Miami Shores, Fla., is happy over the response to the work of Missionary Ben D. Varner. The average attendance for the first quarter of 1955 was 60% above the corresponding quarter a year earlier.

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United Church, Lincoln, Nebr., has seen its Sunday school grow from 33 in 1949 to 208 and its baptized membership from 66 to 456. The Rev. E. C. Hansen is the pastor.

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Grace Church, Virginia, Ill., under the leadership of Missionary Wilbur M. Allen ranked first in the synod in percentage of giving for apportioned benevolence. Its percentage was 143.

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Members of the men's group at Trinity, Olney, Ill., painted the walls and installed an acoustical ceiling in the parsonage basement so that it can be used for nursery and the beginners' and primary departments.

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Trinity church, Fort Erie, Ont., under the leadership of the Rev. C. S. Roberts has inaugurated bus services to bring in Sunday school pupils from outlying districts. The attendance increased 15%.

Redeemer Church, Portland, Ore., passed resolutions to the effect that it would always be open to all Christian believers regardless of nationality or any other factor. It bases this action upon the universality of the Word of God and Christ's plan for the spread of the Gospel, as well as upon Luther's explanation of the third article of the Creed which states that the Church has always admitted members solely on the basis of their personal confession of faith and their declared intent to live in harmony with it No room for segregation in this church.

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Bethany church, San Jose, Calif., participated in the preaching, teaching and reaching mission recently held in that area of California. Forty-six adults indicated interest in uniting with the congregation. There has been a marked increase in attendance at the church school and a number of children have been brought for baptism. The church sees need for the expansion of its building. The Rev. George R. Flora is the missionary pastor.

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The total number of Lutheran home mission congregations organized in 1954 was 123. Of these 55 were in the ULCA. Of interest in this connection is the number of members. The figures are not available for all bodies. The Augustana Church's 19 new congregations averaged 62 charter members. Those of the ULCA had 87.

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Ascension loan mission at Pontiac, Mich., has pledged sufficient funds to make the congregation debt free in 1956. Giving in 1955 has increased 260% over 1954. The Rev. G. L. Garver is the pastor.

New Congregations

The following congregations have been organized since last reports:

Forest Park, Ga., St. Timothy's, on March 6th, by Russel J. Crouse, with 54 charter members;

Monroeville, Pa., Good Shepherd, March 6th, John T. Braughler, 194;

St. Petersburg, Fla., March 27th, Robert G. Walker, 82;

Livonia, Mich., Christ the King, April 3rd, Kenneth D. Larkin, 146;

Spring Park, Minn., Good Shepherd, April 3rd, Merle G. Franke;

Kansas City, Mo., Reformation, April 3rd, Robert E. Schlichter, 70;

Canoga Park, Calif., Resurrection, April 3rd, Kenneth J. Olson, 225;

El Paso, Tex., St. Timothy's, April 3rd, Dale W. Hultgren, 102;

Sunrise Park, Minn., St. Stephen's, April 15, S. S. Schumell;

Washington, D. C., Atonement, April 17th, R. E. Blanset.

These together with those previously reported total 25 thus far in 1955.

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Good Shepherd church, La Crosse, Wis., whose organization was reported in a previous issue, began with 125 charter confirmed members. Of these 18 were never before members of any church. It already is considering the call of its own pastor.

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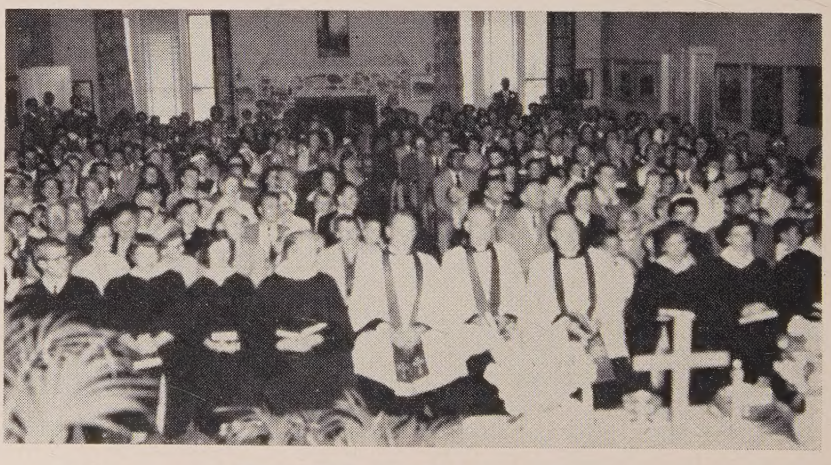
Bethlehem is the new name of a forty-eight year old congregation in Sanger, Calif., which under the leadership of Missionary F. G. Ranlett has become all English in language. The former name was St. Paul's.

California Congregation Organized



Resurrection church, Canoga Park